

Message Text

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ACTION AF-18

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FM AMEMBASSY MOGADISCIO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 2262

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C O N F I D E N T I A L MOGADISCIO 1441

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: OVIP USUN

SUBJ: PRESIDENT SIAD TO VISIT US

REF: MOGADISCIO 1380

1. FONSEC ARTEH HAS JUST INFORMED ME THAT PRESIDENT SIAD PLANS TO VISIT US "LAST WEEK OF SEPTEMBER" - PRECISE DEPARTURE DATE NOT RPT NOT YET FIXED. WHILE SIAD WOULD EXPECT ADDRESS UNGA AS CHAIRMAN OAU, "PRINCIPAL PURPOSE OF HIS VISIT", ACCORDING TO FONSEC, IS TO IMPROVE RELATIONS WITH US. SIAD WOULD HOPE MEET WITH PRESIDENT FORD AND SEE SOMETHING OF US. NATURE AND DURATION OF HIS US VISIT "COMPLETELY UP TO US" - HIS UNGA BUSINESS COULD BE COMPLETED IN ONE DAY. IT COULD BE "OFFICIAL VISIT" OR ANY SPECIAL PROCEDURE NORMALLY USED FOR HEADS OF STATE VISITING UNGA COULD BE FOLLOWED. FONSEC EMPHASIZED GREAT IMPORTANCE OF THIS FIRST TRIP BY SIAD TO US SINCE REVOLUTION FIVE YEARS AGO, SAID HE FELT IT PRESENTED GREAT OPPORTUNITY FOR IMPROVEMENT OF US-SOMALI RELATIONS AND EXPRESSED PERSONAL HOPE THAT USG WOULD DO EVERYTHING POSSIBLE TO MAKE MOST OF VISIT.

2. FONSEC SAID HE WAS VERY MUCH LOOKING FORWARD TO HIS OCT. 3/ MEETING WITH SECRETARY KISSINGER BUT IT WOULD NOW OF COURSE BE DEPENDENT ON HOW AND WHEN SIAD'S TRIP IS ARRANGED.

3. SIAD DECISION, IN MY VIEW, IS INDEED AN IMPORTANT STEP AND
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ONE WE SHOULD WELCOME. I APPRECIATE PRESSURES ON OUR TOP

OFFICIALS DURING THIS UNGA PERIOD AND INDEED EMPHASIZED THEM MORE THAN ONCE TO FONSEC. I WOULD URGE HOWEVER THAT PRESIDENT RECEIVE PRESIDENT SIAD IN WASHINGTON (AS OAU CHAIRMAN AS WELL AS SOMALI PRESIDENT). WHETHER OR NOT THIS IS TREATED AS "OFFICIAL" VISIT, I THINK IT WOULD BE WELL WORTHWHILE TO ARRANGE FOR SIAD TO SEE ADDITIONAL US OFFICIALS AND HOPEFULLY SOMETHING MORE OF US. HE IS MAN WHO LEARNS BY PERSONAL OBSERVATION AND CONTACT, AND SOME EXPOSURE TO US WOULD, I BELIEVE, HAVE CONSIDERABLE IMPACT ON HIM. WHILE HE HAS CLOSE RELATIONS WITH SOVIETS, HE, LIKE ALL SOMALIS, IS VERY INDEPENDENT-MINDED AND HAS GREAT RESPECT FOR US. EFFORTS ON OUR PART TO ENHANCE THIS RESPECT WOULD BE WORTH THE TROUBLE.

4. I SUGGESTED, AND FONSEC CONCURRED, THAT THIS BE DISCUSSED WITH SOMALI AMBASSADOR IN WASHINGTON.

5. I OF COURSE PREPARED RETURN IF THIS WOULD BE USEFUL AND INDEED THINK IT WOULD BE HELPFUL TO MY POSITION HERE TO BE ON HAND IF ANYTHING MORE THAN ADDRESS TO UNGA AND QUICK TRIP TO SEE PRESIDENT IN WASHINGTON IS ARRANGED FOR SIAD.

6. APPRECIATE THAT THIS LATE NOTICE COMPLICATES WASHINGTON'S PROBLEMS BUT THIS IS UNFORTUNATELY STANDARD PRACTICE FOR SOMALIS (REFTEL). WOULD APPRECIATE WASHINGTON'S REACTION TO FONSEC'S APPROACH SOONEST AS "LAST WEEK OF SEPTEMBER" IS PRACTICALLY ON TOP OF US (ALTHOUGH FROM CONTEXT I HAD IMPRESSION FIRST DAYS OF OCTOBER WOULD ALSO BE AGREEABLE). FONSEC ASKED THAT PRESIDENT SIAD'S POSSIBLE VISIT BE KEPT CONFIDENTIAL FOR PRESENT.GEKIRK

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